

## MAUDE ADAMS PLAYS IN BARRIE BURLESQUE

"The Legend of Leonora" at the Empire Pleases Large Audience.

A DELIGHTFUL TRAVESTY

Actress Entrancing in What the Author Calls a "Very Woman."

"The Legend of Leonora"—At the Empire Theatre—Arthur Lewis Justice Grimdyke..... Arthur Lewis Sir Robert Peripety..... Morton Seaton Capt. Rattray, R. N..... Aubrey Smith Mr. Tovey..... Fred Tyler Mr. Tovey..... R. Peyton Carter Leonora..... Maude Adams Lady Peripety..... Elsie Clarendon Mrs. Tovey..... Lenore Chippendale Maid..... Maud Murray

Maude Adams returned to her loyal public at the Empire Theatre last night and incidentally brought her sex to her fourth new work by J. M. Barrie. It is one of the unfortunate skit about the censor, that has been acted here this winter.

Miss Adams always plays her comedy of the compliment of acting in plays worthy of her place in the American theatre. They may not always be suited to her talents or the taste of her public, but they are out of the ordinary rut of the theatre's commonplace. It is sufficient evidence of her ambitions to keep above the usual grade of drama that she has devoted so much of her time to the playwright who provided her with the work in which she was seen last night. Miss Adams acted here for the first time "The Legend of Leonora." The genius of its author has assuredly gone through strange evolutions since this same actress played in "The Little Minister."

Even the transition through "Peter Pan" to "The Legend of Leonora" was merely sufficient to prepare the audience for the lengths to which the playwright carries his fancy in this latest work. W. S. Gilbert never allowed himself more complete emancipation from all human possibilities than J. M. Barrie has in the play called in London last September "The Adored One."

The heroine of this four act extravaganza is an epitome of the eternal feminine whom the author has named a "very woman." She epitomizes the sex to her creator as much as the Glendora of da Vinci represented to Walter Pater all the traits of womanhood. In the delightful first act, which was Barrie of the purest quality, she was supposed to be seven women invited to meet a man at dinner. She was the only woman guest, and taking her for the first, he set out to discover if she were the suffragette, the "very woman," the woman with too great a sense of humor, or she with none. The more men, the more men, the more a celebrated murderer. All the types of the world were represented in this one and not in separate members of the sex as he had supposed. It was a famous sailor suit back from Patagonia, and she was thus making her acquaintance, falling rapidly in love with her and destined to be at the end of the play the second husband of this compendium of all the true feminine traits in the sex.

### The Eternal Feminine.

For it is as a type of the infallible and triumphant womanhood ruling the world that the dramatist has posed his heroine. She is about to go to the Old Bailey prison to be tried for murder, since she pushed a fellow passenger out the door of the compartment because he would insist on keeping a window open. Because Millie was rather a delicate child—this heroine was the widowed mother of seven—said because she had "a sniffling little cold" and he would not allow the window to be closed he just had to be pushed out to his death. The adored Leonora tells this in the court scene that occupies the second and third acts in spite of the efforts of the judges, the lawyers and the whole court to prevent her. But Leonora, knitting by the side of the jury box, speaks with the symbolic certainty of her sex when she sees nothing wrong in having murdered a man because he might have caused some evil to one of her seven.

It was not until after she had talked babies and gardening with the jury, made complete victims of the old Judge and the solicitor and set them all to scheming to get her free, that the defendant went on the witness stand and told confidently and almost proudly just how she had done it. After the jury had sent out for her to assist at its deliberations, a verdict of not guilty was brought in and the adored "very woman" goes free. In a brief last act, she is seen in the nursery of her blood, trying a rocking horse to see that it will support their weights. Her sailor lover, who has been lawyer in the court for her, adds his weight as a test, and after he has succeeded in persuading her that sufficient respect has been shown to her first husband, the affection of the new lover is rewarded.

### Fresh and Crisp Humor.

The first act of the play proved its most delightful division. Here the author kept somewhat to the earth. The interview between the "very woman" and the stranger, in which he discovered that she incarnated all the traits of her kind, was fresh and crisp in its continuous humor and provided Miss Adams with the opportunity to show every quality of her art at its best. Her appearance of innocence and spontaneity, her elusive fascination, which varied with every phrase like the sheen on the wings of a humming bird, captured the spectators so eager to fall into their happy thralldom from the first sentence she spoke. What there was of seriousness lay easily within her gamut, as a tender indignation was the most that she had to suggest. Here was exquisite fun interpreted with exquisite art, for Aubrey Smith was a worthy associate in the triumphant event of the opening scene.

With the court room episodes that occupied the two middle acts the author abandoned himself to intellectual burlesque of a fine type. Against a serious if not a different background the characters distorted themselves with as little regard for plausibility or even possibility as if they were figures in a burlesque of Byron or his contemporaries. W. S. Gilbert seems too realistic to be mentioned in connection with their extravaganzas. But it was never physical burlesque, for the demeanor of them all and their appearance was of this day. It cannot be denied that certain passages were more amusing than others. Inevitably with the wit set at such a high power, it was subject to variations. But the audience was kept in almost constant laughter. And it never had cause to feel ashamed of itself for surrendering so completely to its enjoyment.

### Author Has His Fun.

The fascinations of such an accused applied to a court room are not altogether new. But never has the author's level been kept so high. The judge succumbing to the wiles of the unscrupulous on the heroine's part is promptly called to heel by her to be called by her first name on condition that he might also call her the perjury of the lawyer on the other side. Leonora's contempt for the efforts of all the court room to keep the

truth from coming to light, her own certainty that the jury would acquit her in a minute when she told the real facts about her reasons for pushing the man out of the window—all these were a part of the constant travesty which continued during the second and third acts.

The author had his fun with the practices of court with the verdicts of the average goiter—professional golfers were excluded, as they did it for money, but there was no mercy for the men who merely play for fun—and married life came in for its share of satire when the wife of the prosecuting attorney was called to the stand only to return clad in a new cloak and hat which her husband had bought her during the recesses to get her on his side. It was all capital fooling, smarter at times than it was always, but all strongly marked with the Barrie whimsicality and originality. Miss Adams had capital assistance in these scenes—which really gave her much less opportunity than the opening act—from Arthur Lewis as the judge, Morton Seaton as the prosecuting attorney suddenly confronted by his wife to cross-examine and Aubrey Smith, who acted as the attorney for the inscrutable Leonora.

### Theories as to the Symbolism.

Various theories have been advanced as to the symbolism of J. M. Barrie's heroine. She had been interpreted as the advanced suffragette, who felt that any crime might be forgivable so long as she felt it was her duty to others to commit it. But rather the general irresponsibility of womanhood when the deepest affections are involved seemed what this very woman stood for. Her irresponsibility with the conviction that she had excuse enough to make it right in the eyes of the world. There is, however, an official explanation in that point. The judge spoke it to the heroine after her acquittal, and it was distributed to the audience:

"You are one of those round women legends grow even in their life time. This is the kind of thing you might have done had your little girl had a cold. And this is how we might have acted had you done it. . . . You are not of to-day—foolish, wayward, unself-conscious, communicative. Leonora. The ladies of to-day are different—and wiser. But as we look longingly at you we see again in their habit as they lived, those out of date, unreasoning, womanish creatures, our mothers and grandmothers and other dear ones long ago loved and lost—and as if you were the last woman, Leonora, we bid you hail and farewell."

But the spectators were more interested that the humor of the play was irresistible, that its subject never cast a shadow over the merriment and that Miss Adams, whatever Leonora might be, was never more charmingly revealed to her audience.

### HARRY LAUDER IS BACK.

Begins His Sixth American Tour at the Casino.

Harry Lauder, the Scottish comedian, began his sixth American tour yesterday, appearing at the Casino Theatre under the management of William Morris, who has directed all his American appearances.

Mr. Lauder did not arrive from England until yesterday morning and had no time for a rehearsal, but he was greeted by a large audience. He sang some new songs and repeated some of those already heard here.

### The rest of the programme consisted of several interesting vaudeville acts.

The engagement at the Casino is for one week only.

### Plays and Players.

Mary Shaw, who appeared as Mrs. Alving in "The Ghosts," about ten years ago, has agreed, at the request of many friends and social workers, to play the part at a revival of the play. The date has not been fixed. Miss Shaw said yesterday that the announcement that she would appear in "The House of Bondage" was unauthorized.

John Mason has been engaged by A. H. Woods for the role of Baron Audrey in "The Yellow Ticket," which will have its premiere on Friday night at the Elitine Theatre. The engagement was made by arrangement with Charles Frohman. As Baron Audrey, official head of the Okhrana-Russian secret police, Mr. Mason will have a part widely different from any he has yet portrayed.

Oliver Morosco has engaged Charles A. Abbe and Rosamond O'Kane for important parts in Jack Lait's drama "Help Wanted," which will be produced here early next month. Charles Richmond and Lola Meredith will head the cast.

Arthur Hammerstein and George Edwards concluded negotiations yesterday whereby "High Jinks," which is now being played at the Lyric Theatre, will be presented in London in the spring. The American company will be taken to London.

### Benefit for Consumers League.

For the benefit of the Consumers League of this city a dance will be given to-night in the Plaza ballroom. There will be an exhibition of international dances in costume which have been arranged by Ottokar Bartik, ballet master of the Metropolitan Opera. Among the members of the committee for the dance are Mrs. Elmer Black, Miss Grace Foster, Mrs. Willard D. Straight, Mrs. G. K. B. Wade, Miss Harriet Alexander, Mrs. Frederick Nathan, Miss Elsie Nicoll, Louis Hosmer, E. Gilbert Schenck, George P. Montgomery, Arthur F. Schenck and Charles Elliot Warren.

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## VACATION FUND HOPS TO BEGIN TO-MORROW

Working Girls and Boys Will Be Taught the New Dances for 10 Cents.

AT NEW HEADQUARTERS

Teacher Will Demonstrate the Beauties of Real Tango and Its Fellows.

To-morrow evening at 8 o'clock the first of the weekly hops will take place at the new vacation headquarters, 38 West Thirty-ninth street, where there will be general dancing to which the depositors and their men friends may be admitted upon the payment of 10 cents.

An innovation will be the first practical demonstration of the proper directing of modern dancing in social centers and in working girls' clubs. The floor will be under the supervision of William Seabury, one of the teachers in the new Castle House School, 26 East Forty-sixth street. Mr. Seabury is only 15 years old. He believes there is a larger field of usefulness in teaching modern dancing than in any other form of social service work.

While one of the staff instructors in the Castle House School, which opens its doors this week, Mr. Seabury will devote his evenings to showing working girls and boys how to dance the one step, the hesitation waltz, the tango and the maxixe, so as to eliminate from these dances the many objectionable features which have cropped into them more frequently from ignorance and from lack of proper instruction than from intent.

Mr. Seabury holds with Mr. and Mrs. Vernon Castle that in drawing room dancing there should be no room for adverse criticism. The one step as taught at Castle House eliminates all hoppings, all contortions of the body, all frowning of the brows, all twisting of the arms and, above everything else, all fantastic dips. It bears no relation or resemblance to the once popular turkey trot, bunny hug or grizzly bear. In it is introduced the sliding and poetical "Castle walk."

The hesitation waltz is a refined and stately glide, measured and modest. The once popular turkey trot, bunny hug or grizzly bear, in it is introduced the sliding and poetical "Castle walk." The hesitation waltz is a refined and stately glide, measured and modest. The once popular turkey trot, bunny hug or grizzly bear, in it is introduced the sliding and poetical "Castle walk."

As for the maxixe, this dance is a development of the most attractive kind of folk dancing. Both Mr. and Mrs. Castle have made a specialty of this as a wonderful expression of refined joyousness and of youthful spontaneity. In these dances Mr. Seabury will gradually teach to those who attend the Wednesday vacation hops in the earnest belief that an endless chain of dancing will be inaugurating the right kind of dancing while discouraging the wrong kind will be the result of the undertaking.

Miss Elizabeth Marbury, with whom the plan originated, will be present on Wednesday evening at the vacation headquarters. She thinks that once this movement is set in motion the demand for Mr. Castle's pupil teachers will exceed the supply.

### TALIAFERROS AS COSTARS.

Sisters Make a Broadway Hit in Bright Comedy.

"Young Wisdom"—At the Criterion Theatre. Victoria Claffenden..... Mabel Taliaferro Edith Claffenden..... Edith Taliaferro Judge Claffenden..... Aubrey Beattie Mrs. Claffenden..... Mabel Bert Barry Claffenden..... Junius Matthews Christopher Bruce..... Hayward Ginn Peter Van Horn..... Richard Sterling Max Norton..... Regan Hughston Jean..... Louis La Bay

A jolly little comedy full of laughter and amusement and with just enough moral not to hurt if served to bring the Taliaferro sisters to the first time to Broadway as costars. It was no easy matter to fit these two aspiring young women with satisfactory parts in the same play, but Rachel Crothers in "Young Wisdom" has succeeded in doing so. The sisters are both on the stage when the curtain rises, so there is no question of precedence in their entrances, and from then on the situations are evenly ported out and the lines are divided as if with a tape measure.

There were no scenes that required any very heavy acting in the comedy, so that the powers of the young stars were not unduly strained. Both looked very charming and both obviously enjoyed the trial.



## A BOSCH Exhibition

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umph which the pleasant success of the play and the warm personal welcome they received meant to them. Miss Crothers had fitted them out with Tempest and Sunshine roles. Tempest, falling naturally to Edith by virtue of her brunette coloring, was self-willed and determined, while Sunshine, being of course the blond sister, talked a great deal about freedom for women and a lot of other things, and subsided gracefully into the arms of her lover when the proper time came.

There was nothing especially novel or original in the plot, which the author adjusted to her stars, but it was well handled and was rarely talked. The play moved briskly, the lines were bright and the situations amusing. The story dealt with the practical application to her own family affairs of half baked feminist doctrine picked up by the young Victoria Claffenden, the blond sister, while at college. Her young sister, Edith, has eagerly absorbed all this modern philosophy, and on the eve of her wedding to her childhood sweetheart she suddenly decides to make a stand for freedom, whatever that might be.

At the moment this decision took the form of eloping with her lover and launching a trial marriage rather than undergo the conventional wedding march and white veil affairs that had been planned. Into this scheme she dragged her reluctant sweetheart, Peter, who consented to the elopement only when he had induced Victoria's lover, Christopher, to bring the sister and follow them, the idea being to give the girls a dose of their own medicine and frighten them into returning home and being married conventionally.

The four met at the summer studio of a startled and highly disapproving young artist whose failure to understand the utterly incomprehensible situation supplied much of the comedy of the second act. Victoria had completely lost her nerve and thought only of getting back home, while Edith still stood out for the "larger freedom." At the end both were gathered up bodily and carried off in a motor car to no one's great where.

The third act returned to the Claffen-

den home, back to which the young men had brought the girls to face the wrath of an exceedingly old fashioned and conventional father. But the "trial marriage," brief as it was, had been a success, for Edith and Peter had discovered their mistake and Victoria had been brought to a realization of the uses of a marriage ceremony. A second elopement in the one night, with a kidnapped mother as a chaperone furnished a solution for the difficulties and an escape from the father and his red dressing gown.

Apart from the roles of the Taliaferro sisters the best acting chance fell to Richard Sterling with the part of the simple, dull, slow witted, honest hearted Peter. Hayward Ginn was Christopher and Regan Hughston was the artist.

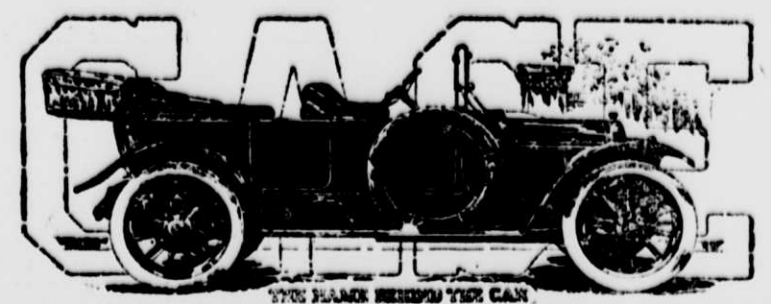
### HAMMERSTEIN DELAYS OPERA.

New House Won't Be Opened Until Next September.

Oscar Hammerstein decided yesterday not to open his new opera house, now building in Lexington avenue, until the first week in September. It was to have opened the middle of this week.

Mr. Hammerstein explained that difficulty in striking bedrock for the foundations had caused the contractors such delays that it would be impossible to finish the building before March. Then, too, he explained, it was doubtful if the proceedings now before the Appellate Division to dissolve the injunction obtained by the Metropolitan Opera Company restraining him from producing opera in this city would be decided before late next month.

Mr. Hammerstein said that the chorus had been paid off, to reassemble for rehearsals in August, several of the principals had been placed with other companies and that other singers, including Orville Harrell, Morris Kellermann, Alice Gentle and Nina Morana, would make a concert tour under the name of the Hammerstein Grand Opera Company.



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